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TAMIL NADU ARCHIVES

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU

Revenue DEPARTMENT

G.O. No. 662 Press
B.P. No. Mis.

Dated 13-2-1877 197 .

Not to be folded or roughly handled

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
13th February 1877.

No. 422. Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 26th January 1877, No. 309.

Read again Board's Proceedings, dated 3rd May 1876, No. 1,157.

Read also the following letters in reply thereto, and G.O., 15th November 1876, No. 2,691, requesting that the report called for by the Government of India on the development of the Tasar silk industry may be expedited.

From the	Collector	of Ganjam,	dated	20th Sept.	1876,	No. 3,186.
,,	,,	of Vizagapatam,	,,	30th Aug.	,, ,,	1,335.
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In their resolution embodied in G. O., dated 10th January 1876, No. 27, the Government of India review the steps which have been taken towards the development of a profitable industry in the silk of the undomesticated silk-spinning worms of India, and after noticing the progress made in solving the two great difficulties to which attention has hitherto been chiefly directed, viz., the defective reeling and dyeing of the silk, proceed to point out that there are other and more serious obstacles to be overcome, firstly the cost of collecting the cocoons of the undomesticated worm, owing to the vast area over which they are distributed; and, secondly, the impracticability of attempting such reeling as is required to fit Tasar for the European market without skilled European supervision and the best mechanical appliances owing to certain peculiarities of the filaments spun by the worm. It was remarked that the conditions of successful manufacture are such as to prevent the reeling of silk being carried on as a village industry, and that if anything is to be done for the country, it must be in the way of increased exports either of cocoons or the raw silk. Information concerning the cost of collection of cocoons, reeling, &c., being deficient in regard to Tasar the Government of India directed careful experiments and inquiries to be made with a view to a settlement of the doubtful points, and the Board were called upon

for any suggestions they might have to offer. No information being available in the Board's Office, Collectors were requested to inquire and report as to the existence of Tasar and other undomesticated silk-worms in their districts, and as to whether the raw material is utilized locally, with particulars of quality, cost of production, &c.

2. From the foregoing replies it appears that the Tasar silk-worm exists in most of the districts in the Presidency, but is nowhere very abundant. In Ganjam, it is found in the Maliah tracts, but the only use to which the silk is put is as ligatures to fasten barrels of matchlocks to the stocks and in the construction of arrows, for which purpose it is prized by the hill-men on account of its strength; the price is stated to be 8 Annas a hundred. The cocoons do not appear to be collected for the manufacture of fabrics, as the raw material is imported from the Central Provinces and Bengal into Berhampore for the weaving which is carried on there.

Mr. Goodrich reports that the Tasar worm is found in the extreme north-west of Jeypore and in the adjacent district of Bustar; that the cocoons are collected to a certain extent, but are sent northwards to be reeled. He mentions having seen the cocoon in great abundance in Kalahandy, whence the cocoons are sent to Sonepore on the Mahanadi. The price of the best Tasar silk cloth at Sonepore is stated to be a rupee a yard, the width being a yard and a-half. The only portion of the Kistna District in which the Tasar silk-worm is found is the Vissanapett Division, but the use and value of the silk is not understood. The Deputy Tahsildar states, however, that in the Nizam's dominions, adjoining the Kistna District, considerable attention is paid to the breeding of the worm, and the process of reeling is reported to be understood. The worm is also found to a limited extent in all the other districts, except the Godavery, Bellary, Chingleput, Tanjore, Tinnevelly, Trichinopoly, Nilgiri and Salem Districts, but it appears to be confined to a few scattered villages and to be generally scarce. No mention is made of the cocoons being utilized except in the Kadiri taluq of Cuddapah, and in the Head Assistant Collector's Division of North Arcot. The manufacture of silk from the domesticated worm at Kadiri is stated to have been discontinued of recent years, owing to the Mulberry trees having died; but in former days, when the industry was in a more thriving condition, it appears that cocoons of undomesticated species were collected, and attention paid to breeding from them. In North Arcot, it is stated that no attempt is made to reel off the silk, but the filaments are torn to pieces, and then subjected to a process, which the Collector terms "flipping," like cotton, *i.e.*, beaten with a bow, it is presumed, after which the silk is spun into thread and used in the manufacture of coarse cloth. The Collector of Salem reports that silk reeling was formerly carried on in the Oossoor taluq, but has been discontinued, owing to the want of success experienced. The Collector of Coimbatore considers that the difficulties in the way of collecting the cocoons of the wild species at the exact period, when they are fit for use, and in protecting the worms in a semi-wild state from destruction, are insuperable. Mr. Thomas draws attention to the utilization of the Tasar worm in the manufacture of catgut for fishing, and suggests the advisability of encouraging the manufacture of this article as a mean of employing women and children and the aged and infirm. The practical question is, as he observes, whether there is any probability of a sufficient market being found for such a product, and in the absence of statistics, no conclusion can be arrived at on this

3. From Dr. Bidie's report it appears that there are only three important species of undomesticated silk-producing moths in Southern India, of which colored plates have been furnished. Dr. Bidie states that the Tasar moth is very generally distributed over the Presidency, but is nowhere very abundant and the cocoons are not sufficiently abundant to repay the cost of collecting. On a microscopic examination of the filaments taken direct from the Tasar cocoon, however, he has failed to detect any such quality in structure as is mentioned in paragraph 15 of the resolution of the Government of India; a representation of the filament is given in Plate I. The second species mentioned, viz., *Actias Selene*, is less common than the Tasar; and the third is not found in this Presidency, but is common in Coorg. Dr. Bidie understands that the silk of the former has been reeled at Pondicherry, but considers that that of the latter could never be turned to any practical purpose. The specimens of cocoons received from the districts were sent to Dr. Bidie for examination. In reply, he states that the cocoons received from Cuddapah, Kistna, Nellore, and Madura, are those of the common Tasar of fair quality but rather small, those from North Arcot and Kurnool rather coarse, those from Ganjam and Vizagapatam large, dark in color with much gummous matter; the single cocoon sent from Malabar is dark and imperfect. He adds that the cocoons forwarded from Ganjam and Vizagapatam, which differ considerably from those sent from other districts, may be the product of the common Tasar, the extra size and dark color being due to food and climatic peculiarities or they may be the product of other species. Specimens of the moth are required to decide the point; the Collectors of Ganjam, Vizagapatam, and Malabar will be requested to procure them for further investigation.

4. From the information now furnished, it is clear that a traffic in the cocoons or raw silk of the undomesticated worm is never likely to be established in this Presidency. The papers will be submitted for the information of Government.

(A true Copy and Extract.)

(Signed) C. A. GALTON,
Acting Sub-Secretary.

(True Copy.)

(Signed) D. F. CARMICHAEL,
Secretary to Government.

Lrd. V. R. Bantleman.

REVENUE DEPARTMENT,
FORT ST. GEORGE,
13*th February* 1877.

No. 423.

No. 662.

To

THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA,
DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE,
AGRICULTURE, AND COMMERCE.

Miscellaneous.

SIR,—Referring to the Resolution
he Government of India, dated 23rd
vember 1875, No. 5-156—165, on
of the Tasar worm, &c., I am now
bmit copy of the Proceedings of the
ltimo, No. 309, and to state that His
oard have arrived after communication
the Museum at Madras, that a traffic
esticated worm is never likely to be

the de pment of an industry in the
directed by the Governor in Council to
Board of Revenue, dated 26th January
Grace concurs in the opinion at which the
with the Collectors and the Superintendent
in the cocoons or raw silk of the undo
established in this Presidency.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,
Your most obedient servant,
(S ned) D. F. CARMICHAEL,
Secretary to Government.

F. R. Bantleman.

Agriculture {1877} Department.

[ ]

Government of Fort St. George.

Dated 13th February 1877. } No. 662. Enclosures.
Received } 5 spare copies.

D. No. Progs.

L. No. No. 422-4

FORWARDING Board's Proceedings on the development of an industry in the Tasar and other undomesticated silk-worms, and concurring with the Board in the opinion that a traffic in the cocoons or raw silk of the undomesticated worm is never likely to be established in the Madras Presidency.

662/4

No. 309.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF REVENUE, dated 26th January 1877.

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(A true Copy and Extract.)

Acting Sub-Secretary.

To the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department,
with a box and parcel containing cocoons, and
twenty-two original reports to be returned.

To all Collectors.
,, the Superintendent, Government Central Museum.

Exd. W. H. French.

Revenue 1877. Dep^t

Board of Revenue,
MADRAS.

No. 1217

PROCEEDINGS, 26TH JANUARY 1877, No. 309.

Dep^t 9 Feby 77.

Encl. 23 on Pa Ref.

Received 10 Feb^y

JANUARY.
No. 309.

Tasar and other undomesticated Silk-worms.
—Submitting to Government, with Board's views, reports from Collectors as to existence of — in their districts and as to whether raw silk is utilised locally.

Tasar Silkworms R.D.

662/6

Bds. Prop. 26/1-77

No 309

A letter may, I presume, go to Govt. India, stating the result at wt. the Bt. have arrived & concurring in it.

Dr. 10/2/7.

Yes. A. Olcott
Shd have been consulted but it does not matter now as it was a delay

12/2 1111